411 various shapes were somewhat more common. Long lances and shorter throwing spears, both with fine, long iron
714 heads, were in use. Round rhinoceros shields belonging to officers were often ornamented carefully with brass or even silver or gold plates arranged in geometric patterns; circles; colorful velvet embroidery, granted as reward gifts for special bravery. Crown-like bands worn around forehead and skull, of gold, silver or lion-mane, were given to officers as decorations for bravery.

More lasting awards were available only in the form of "gult" fiefs.

701 Table 5: Land Tenure of Artisans and Chaplains.

Title and Rank	Function	Reward in Land Tenure
bajirond (lit. treasurer)	(ethnic-origin) quartermaster, chief of artisans	"rest-gult" lands, inheritable.
qēs (priest)	army chaplain, carrier of sacred "tabot" (representing home church, and symbolizing the ark of the ancient Israelites.	"rest-gult" land, given to parish church.

725 The Amhara army on the march (or any Abyssinian army) has been described as resembling a migrating people rather than a disciplined-looking army. Supplies and equipment crawling over the landscape on donkey or human carriers, might amount to two-thirds of the army. Servants, priests, women and children, household utensils, cattle and sheep, huge jars of beer, etc., seemed to surround the main military caval-

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

●725 ry and footsoldiers and main tents in all directions.[73] But there was a central structure, and well-understood functioning of parts.

725 701 Only officers from the dejasmach upward could announce the signal for mobilization and decampment, through the sound of drums and bugles. The time and place of assembly would be announced beforehand. The Council of War would meet and decide strategy as well as tactics: Who should fight where, and what secret signals were to be used. This Council usually consisted of the king, the ras commanders of armies, the dejazmach commanders of main divisions, and the blatengeta of the rear guard. After that, the young commanders of the advance guards, "fitawrari", who understood tactics, received their orders, and were sent two to three days ahead of the main body, for reconnaissance or to maintain contact with the enemy. The cavalry would protect the right and left flanks of the main body, commanded by appropriate gerazmach's, qanazmach's and fitawraris.

The main body, "gädam ṭor", was directly commanded by the king. In his absence, a temporary commander-in-chief was elected by the Council of War, with the title "abägaz", or "yäṭor täqlay" (lit. war chief). The main body also included the stores ("eqa"), the quartermaster ("bajirond") and his artisans, and the priests with the tabot. Finally, the rear guard protected from unexpected enemy attack, buried the dead, picked up the weary and wounded, and was itself organized into right

73. Rohrer: Beiträge.... 1932, p.117.

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

725 and left flanks.
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Fanning out in all directions, detachments of light cavalry and foragers on foot, "fano", could destroy and plunder enemy land to do as much damage as possible while on the march. When re-encampment was ordered, the tent of the king or field commander was set up first, and the army divisions and followers, seeing this, grouped themselves accordingly and settled in their proper locations, distances, areas and relative positions. The quartermaster thereupon took over the functions of maintenance and supplies.[74]

[554] This pattern of "relative positions" and functions carried over into civilian life, and dominated land tenure, administration, law, social structure, organized religion, the life cycle, artistic expression, and a multitude of human relations.

C. Significance of the old Military Organization in Modern Change.

178 The spear, the rhinoceros shield and armies paid by land grants have now become memories of the past, [554] though recent past. Yet most of the attitudes and many of the roles that accompanied the old military organization still linger and dominate social organization.

[473] Much of the old land tenure is still little changed in the old-Amhara provinces, as has been pointed out.

74. Sadie: An Amharic Reader, 1924, pp. 86-7.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

structured. But the marching and fighting unit seems to have been, for all practical purposes, the individual soldier and his retainers. Battles were not fought in a disciplined manner; the outcome depended on the sheer numbers of troops, their state of morale, and the chance of catching the enemy off guard. Except for the large-scale deployment of troops in accord with the customary tactic of envelopment, there was little expectation of subordinating the impulses of individual soldiers to the needs of a "team"; for the prevailing military ethic stressed rather the heroism of the individual soldier and his drive to bring back a maximum of booty and trophies.[35]

The independent status of the common soldier in mass levies was based on the fact that he was primarily a peasant and thus expected to return to his fields as soon as a particular campaign was over. Nor were members of the more permanent armies of lords greatly constrained. Loyalty to one's lord was in many cases a lasting tie, and accounts for much of the stability that existed in such arrangements. But in general it appears to have been a factor of far less moment than was the case, for example, in feudal Japan. The Amhara soldier felt he was fighting for a lord by his own free will and, therefore, had every right to leave him when conditions justified a move. One such condition was when the lord did not reward his followers liberally enough. Another related condition was when the lord had a tendency to suffer defeat in battle. Indeed, it was not uncommon for soldiers to swarm from one side to the other during a battle when defeat for their side seemed imminent. Still another basis for deserting one's chief was the ambition of a vassal to acquire greater power, in which case he might rebel—become a *shīftā*, in the original sense of the word—and build up a military force of his own in the hope either of impressing his erstwhile master sufficiently to be reinstated with greater honors, or of taking his place by vanquishing him in combat, or simply of carrying on as a free agent.

The civilian counterpart of the soldier's right of desertion or rebellion was the right of judicial appeal which belonged to every free Amhara. This pertained primarily to the area of property rights. A man who suffered some grievous injustice in a local court had the right of appeal, in theory at least and often in practice, to higher courts at the provincial and imperial level. There was, in addition, some possibility of relief from an inordinately oppressive governor. He might be removed accidentally by the emperor, in the continuous process of *shum-shīr;* the people under his jurisdiction might secure his deposition through appeals to the emperor or his overlord; or they might take arms behind one of his rebellious subordinates and overthrow him by force. Traditional Amhara society thus provided significant areas of social freedom for its citizens despite the feudal obligations that lay heavy upon them.